

Application No. 10/072,494
Docket No. A1-1431
Amendment dated March 3, 2005
Reply to Office Action of January 4, 2005

REMARKS

In the Office Action, the Examiner reviewed claims 1-40 of the above-identified US Patent Application, with the result that claims 4-6, 12-20, 24-26, and 32-40 were allowed but claims 1-3, 7-11, 21-23 and 27-31 were rejected for a second time under 35 USC §102 and/or §103 in view of Japanese patent JP363222038A to Kawakami, U.S. Patent No. 4,683,790 to Bittner, and U.S. Patent No. 2,961,024 to Urschel et al. In response, Applicant has amended the claims as set forth above. More particularly:

Independent claims 1 and 21 have been amended to incorporate all limitations from their respective dependent claims 3, 5, 23, and 25 (now canceled), thereby incorporating the subject matter of allowable dependent claims 5 and 25.

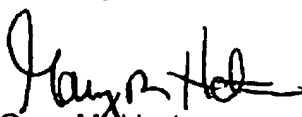
In view of the cancellation of their parent claims 3 and 23, dependent claims 4, 6, 7, 24, 26, and 27 have been amended to depend directly from their respective parent claims 1 and 21.

In view of the above, all rejections have been overcome. It is therefore respectfully requested that this patent application be given favorable reconsideration.

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Should the Examiner have any questions with respect to any matter
now of record, Applicant's representative may be reached at (219) 462-4999.

Respectfully submitted,

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